WRITTERN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Change in geographical map due to Tsunami

*326. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that following Tsunami, the geographical map of the country has undergone a change;

(b) if so, whether any assessment in this regard has been made by the Survey of India or any other agency;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the extent of changes in the geographical map?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No sir, the geographical map of India has not undergone much of change except in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(b) to (d) Survey of India has inducted a Global Positioning System (GPS) and tidal teams for initial assessment of the changes in the horizontal position as well as in the mean sea level. Efforts are on to prepare large scale topographical map of the Andaman & Nicobar area.

Reduction in land line charges

†*331. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the private and even Government Cellular and WLL service providers are effectively competing with Land Line Service Providers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner, Government would make land line charges much

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

lower than cellular and WLL Service Providers to help the rural users all over the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) and (b) Land line, Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) based fixed & limited mobile services and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS) are all access technologies and complementary to each other. There is a growth in Land line as well as mobile service subscribers. However, the growth of cellular and WLL services has been higher than that of Land line services during the past few years because of easy as well as quick to roll out and inherent advantages of mobility & roaming. The number of subscribers in Cellular (including WLL) and Land Line (fixed line) during the last five years is given in the enclosed statement (*See* below).

(c) in view of the prevailing competition in the market, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has forborne tariff for most telecom services. In order to make available affordable telephone services in rural areas, TRAI has mandated standard tariff package prescribing charges for monthly rental, call charges & free calls applicable for rural areas. The tariff for Land line for rural users prescribed by TRAI are much below the cost of provision. In addition to this, service providers are free to offer alternate tariff packages in rural areas to meet the requirement of various categories of the subscribers based on their usage pattern and commercial viability.

Statement

Number of Subscribers in Cellular (Including WLL) and fixed Line

(Figures in Million)

Year ended 31st March	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005*
Cellular and WLL	1.90	3.58	6.54	13.00	33.69	51.44
Fixed line	26.65	32.71	38.33	41.48	42.84	45.59
Total	28.55	36.29	44.87	54.48	76.53	97.03

*Figures up to February, 2005.